



CERTAINE
Praiers collected out of
a fourme of godly Meditations;
set forth by her Majesties authoritie
in the great Mortal tie, in the fift yeare of her
Highneste raigne, and most necessarie to be vfed
at this time in the like present visitation of God
heauie hand for our manifold sinnes, and com-
mended vnto the Ministers and people of
London, by the Reverend Father in
God, John Bishop of London,
&c. Iulij. 1593.

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ter to the Queenes most excel-
lent Majestie.



1940

The Preface.



E bee taught by many and sundry examples of
holy Scriptures, that upon occasion of particu-
lar punishments, afflictions, and perils, which
God of his most iust judgement hath sometimes
sent among his people, to shew his wrath against
sinne, and to call his people to repentance, and
to the redresse of their liues, the godly bane
benepronoked and stirred vp to more feruencie & diligence in pray-
er, fasting, and almes deedes, to a more deepe consideration of their
consciences, to ponder their unthankefulnesse and forgetfulnesse of
Gods mercifull benefites towards them, with craving of pardon for the
time past, and to aske his assistance for the time to come, to liue more
godly, and so to be defended and delivereed from all further perils and
dangers. So king David in the time of plague and pestilence which 2.Sam.24
ensued upon his vaine numbring of the people, prayed unto God with
wonderfull feruencie, confessing his fault, desyring God to spare the
people, and rather to turne his ire to himward, who had chiefly offend-
ed in that transgression. The like was done by the vertuous kings
Iosaphat and Ezechias in their distresse of warres and foreine inva-
sions. So did Judith and Hester fall to humble prayers in like perils 2.Chr.1
of their people. So did Daniel in his captiuitie, and many other moe 2.Reg.19
in their troubles. Note therefore calling to minde, that God hath
benepronoked by vs to visite vs at this present with the plague and o-
ther grievous diseases, and partly also with trouble of warres: It hath
bene thought meete to excite and stirre vp all godly people within this
Realme, to pray earnestly and heartily to God, to turne away his de-
serued wrath from vs, and to restore vs as well to the health of our
bodies by the whole somnesse of the are, as also to godly and profitable
peace and quietnesse. And although it is every Christian mans due-
tie, of his owne devotion to pray at all times: yet for that the corrupt
nature of man is so slouthfull and negligent in this his dutie, hee hath
need by often and sundry meanes to bee stirred vp and put in remem-
brance of his duetie. For the effectuall accomplishment whereof, it is
ordered and appointed, as followeth.

First, that all Curates and Pastours, shall exhort their Parishioners to endeour themselves to come unto the Church, with so many of their families as may be spared from their necessarie busynesse, (having yet a prudent respect in such assemblies to keepe the sicke from the whole, in places where the plague reigneith) and they to resort, not onely on Sundayes and holy dayes: but also on Wednesdayes and Fridayes, during the time of these present afflictions, exhorting them, thererently and godly to behauem selves, and with penitent hearts to pray unto God to turne these plagues from vs, which wee through our unthankfulness and sinfull life, haue deserved.

Secondly, that the sayde Curates shall then distinctly, and plainely reade the generall Confession appoynted in the booke of Service, and the Absolution following.

Then shall beginne the Lordes prayer. Our Father &c.

Then likewise shall followe. O Lord open thou our lips. &c.

Then shall be sayde this Psalme following. Psal.95. O come, let vs sing vnto the Lorde, &c.

Afterwardes, some three of these Psalmes. Psal.6. 39.51.90
91.94.130.

Then for the first Lesson one of these Chapters. 2.Samuel.24:
2.Reg.24.

Then Te Deum shall followe.

Then for the second Lesson one of these Chapters. Matth.6.24.

Then Benedictus, with the other accustomed prayers.

Then the Letanie. And after the ende of these Collectes,
O God mercifull Father, &c. Wee humbly beseech thee, &c.
O Lord our heauenly Father, almighty & euerlasting God, &c.
O almighty God, King of all Kings, &c. Almighty God,
which in thy wrath, &c. shall follow this Psalme: one verse sayde by
the Minister, and an other by the people,

The

The Pialme to be laide in the Letanie : Whereof one verse to be laide
of the Minister, and another by
the people, Clarke or Clarks.



Come, let vs humble our selues, and fall downe
before the Lord, with reverence and feare.

I
Psal.95.

For he is the Lord our God: and we are the
people of his pasture, and the sheepe of his
hands.

2

Come therefore, let vs turne againe vnto our
Lord, for hee hath smitten vs, and he shall heale vs.

3
Osc.6.2.

Let vs repent, and turne from our wickednes : and our sinnes
shalbe forgiuen vs.

4
Actes.3.

Let vs turne, and the Lorde will turne from his heauie wrath, and
will pardon vs, and we shall not perish.

5
Iona.3.

For we knowledge our faultis: and our sins be euer before vs.
We haue soze prouoked thine anger, O Lord, thy wrath is waxed
hote, and thy heauy displeasure is soze kindled against vs.

6
Psal.51.

7
Lament.3.

Thou hast made vs heare of the noise of wars, and hast trou-
bled vs by the vexation of enemies.

8

Thou hast in thine indignation striken vs with greeuous sickenes,
and by and by we haue fallen as leaves beaten downe with a vehe-
ment winde.

9
Esa.64.

Indeed we acknowledge, that all punishments are lesse then
our deseruings : but yet of thy mercy Lorde correct vs to a-
mendment, and plague vs not to our destruction.

10
Judith.8.

11
Job 11.

Sap.11.

For thy hand is not shortened, that thou canst not helpe : neither is
thy goodness abated, that thou wilt not heare.

12

Thou hast promised,O Lorde , that afore wee crye thou wilt
heare vs : whilst wee yet speake thou wilt haue mercy vpon
vs.

13
Esa.65.

For none that trust in thee shalbe confounded : neither any that cal
vpon thee shal be despised.

14

For thou art the only Lord, who woundest, and doest heale
againe, who killest, and reviuuest, bringest euен to hell, and
bringest backe againe.

Tob.3.

Job 5.

Osc.6.

Our fathers hoped in thee, they trusted in thee, and thou diddest
deliuere them.

16 They called vpon thee, and were helped: they put their trust
in thee, and were not confounded.

17 O Lord, rebuke not vs in thine indignation: neither chaffen vs in
thy heauie displeasure.

18 Psal.6. O remember not the sinnes and offences of our youth : but
according to thy mercie thinke thou vpon vs, O Lorde, for
thy goodnes.

19 Psal.35. Haue mercie vpon vs, O Lord, for we are weake: O Lorde heale
vs for our bones are vexed.

20 Baruc.3. And now in the vexation of our sptridges, and the anguish of
our soules, we remember thee, and we crievnto thee: heare
Lord, and haue mercie.

21 Iona.2. For thine owne sake, and for thy holie name sake, incline thine
ear, and heare, O mercifull Lord.

22 Dan.9. For we do not powre out our priuers before thy face, trusting
in our owne righteousnesse: but in thy great and manifolde
mercies.

23 Psal.79. Wash vs throughly from our wickednes: and clese vs from our
sinnes.

24 Turne thy face from our sinnes, & put out all our misdeedes.
25 Make vs cleane hearts, O God: and renew a right spirit within vs.

26 Help vs, O God of our saluation, for the glory of thy name: O
deliuere vs, and be mercifull vnto our sins for thy names sake.
So we that be thy people, and sheepe of thy Pasture, shal giue thee
thankes for euer, and will alwayes be shewing forth thy praise,
from generation to generation.

27 Glory be to the Father, &c.

G After this Psalme, shalbe saide by the Curate or Minister o-
penly and with an high voice, one of these three prayers follow-
ing. At which time, the people shall devoutly giue ear, and
shall both with minde and speach to themselves, assent to the
same prayers humbly vpon their knees.

TA

A Prayer, conteining also a Confession of sinnes. Which is to be said after the Letany , aswell vpon Sundayes, as Wednesdaies and Fridaies.



Allmichtie, most iust and mercifull God, we here acknowledge our selues most vnwoorthy to lift vp our eies vnto heauen, for our conscience doth accuse vs, & our sins do reprooue vs. wee knowe also that thou, Lord, being a iust iudge, must needes punish the sinnes of them which transgress thy Lawe. And when wee consider and examine all our whole life, wee finde nothing in our selues, that deserueth anie other thing but eternall damnation . But because thou, O Lorde, of thy unspeakable mercie, hast commaunded vs in all our necessities to call onelie vpon thee, and hast also promised, that thou wilst heare our prayers, not for anie our desert (which is none) but for the merits of thy Sonne our onely Sauour Jesus Christ , whome thou hast ordeneid to be our onlie Mediatour and Intercessour. We lay away all confidence in man, and doe flee to the throne of thy onelie mercie, by the intercession of thy only Sonne our Sauour Jesus Christ . And first of all, wee doe most lament and bewayle, from the bottome of our hearts,

hearts, our vnkindnesse and unthankefulnesse
towardes thee our Lorde, considering that be-
sides those thy benefites which wee enjoy as thy
creatures, common with all mankinde, thou
hast bestowed many and singular speciall bene-
fites vpon vs, which wee are not able in heart
to conceyue, much lesse in wordes worthily to
expresse. Thou hast called vs to the knowledge
of thy Gospell. Thou hast released vs from the
harde seruitude of Sathan. Thou hast deliue-
red vs from all horrible and execrable Idolatry,
wherin wee were utterly drowned, and hast
brought vs into the most cleare and comforta-
ble light of thy blessed worde, by the which wee
are taught how to serue and honour thee, and
howe to liue orderly with our neighbours in
truthe and veritie. But wee most vniminde-
full in times of prosperitie, of these thy great
benefites haue neglected thy commandements,
haue abused the knowledge of thy Gospell,
and haue followed our carnall libertie, and ser-
ued our owne lustes, and through our sinnefull
life, haue not worshipped and honoured thee as
we ought to haue done. And nowe, O Lorde, be-
ing euен compelled with thy correction, wee doe
most humbly confesse that wee haue sinned, and
haue most grieuously offended thee by many and
sundry wapes. And if thou, O Lorde, wouldest
now being prouoked with our disobedience, so
deale with vs as thou might, and as we haue de-
serued, there remayneth nothing els to be looked

for, but uniuersall and continual plagues in this
 world, and hereafter eternall death and damna-
 tion, both of our bodies and of our soules. For if
 we shoulde excuse our selues, our owne conscienc-
 es would accuse vs before thee, and our owne
 disobedience and wickednesse woulde beare wit-
 nesse against vs. Yea, euen thy plagues and pun-
 nishmentes which thou doest nowe lay vpon
 vs in sundry places, doe teach vs to acknowledge
 our sinnes. For seeing, O Lord, that thou art iust,
 yea euē iustice it selfe, thou punishest no peo-
 ple without desert. Yea, even at this present O
 Lord, wee see thy hand terribly stretched out to
 plague vs, and punish vs. But although thou
 shouldest punish vs more grievously than thou
 hast done, and for one plague send an hundred,
 if thou shouldest powre vpon vs all those thy te-
 stimonies of thy most iust wrath, which in times
 passed thou powredst on the owne chosen people
 of Israel: yet shouldest thou doe vs no wrong,
 neyther could wee deny but wee had justly deser-
 ved the same. But yet, O mercifull Lord, thou art
 our God, and wee nothing but dust and aheare.
 Thou art our creatour, and we the worke of thy
 handes: Thou art our pastor, we are thy flocke:
 Thou art our redeemer, and we thy people redee-
 med: Thou art our heauenly father, we are thy
 childe: vnto herfore pouesse not, O Lord, in
 thine anger, but chasten us in thy mercy. Re-
 gard not the horror of our sinnes, but the re-
 pentance therof: peruse that worke which

thou hast begunne in vs, that the whole woldē
 may know, that thou art our God and mercifull
 deliuerer. Thy people of Israel often times of-
 fended thee, and thou most iustly affiected hem:
 but as oft as they returned to thee, thou diddest
 receiue them to mercie. And though their sinnes
 were never so great, yet thou alwayes turnedest
 away thy borach from them, and the punishment
 prepared for them, and that for thy couenant
 sake, which thou madest with thy seruantes, A-
 braham, Isaac, and Jacob. Thou hast made the
 same couenant with vs (O heavenly Father) or
 rather a couenant of more excellencie and effica-
 cie, and that namely through the mediation of
 thy deare Sonne Jesus Christ our Sauour,
 with whose most precions blood, it pleased thee
 that this couenant shold be, as it were, written,
 sealed, and confirmed. Wherefore, O heavenly Fa-
 ther, we nowe casting all confidence in our
 selues or any other creature, doe sticke to this most
 holy couenant & Testament, wherein our Lord
 a Sauour Jesus Christ, once offered himselfe a
 sacrifice for vs on the croesse, hath reconciled vs to
 thee for ever. Looke therefore, O mercifull God,
 not upon the sinnes whiche wee continually com-
 mit, but vpon our medesatour a peace maker Jesus
 Christ, that by his intercession thy wrath may be
 pacified, and against thy further coueriance
 relieved and consoled. Wee leue vs also into thy
 heavenly defensce, and gouerne vs by thy holy
 sprite, to frame in vs a meaneesse of life, therina-
 fter

to laude and magnifie thy blessed name for ever,
and to live every of vs according to the severall
state of life whereunto thou Lorde hast ordeyned
vs in godly feare & trembling before thee. And al-
though we are vnworthy (O heauenly father) by
meanes of our former soule life, to craue any
thing of thee: yet because thou hast commaunded
vs to pray for all men, wee most humbly here kn-
on our knees beseech thee, saue and defende thy
holy Church, be mercifull, O Lorde to all com-
mon weales, Countreyes, Princes, and Magis-
trates, and especially to this our Realme, and to
our most gracious Queene and gouernour
Queene Elizabeth, increaseth the number of god-
ly Ministers, endite them with thy grace to bee
sound faithfull and prouent in their office, defend
the Queens Maiesties Councell, and all that
be in authoritie vnder her, or that serue in any
place by her commandement for this Realme.
We commend also to thy facherly mercy, all those
that be in pouertie, exyle, imprisonment, sicknesse
or any other kinde of aduersitie, and specially
those whome this hand now hath touched with
any contagious and dangerous sickness, wherwith
wee beseech thee, O Lorde, of thy mercies (concern-
thy blessed will is) to remoue from vs, and in the
meane time, graunt vs grace and true repen-
tance, stedfast faith, and constant patience, thas
whether we liue or dye, wee may alwayes conti-
nue thine, and ever praise thy holy name, and be
brought to the frution of thy Godhead. Graunte

B.ii.

vs

vs these and all other our humble petitions (O mercifull Father) for thy deare sonnes sake Jesu Christ our Lord. Amen.

Or else in the steade of the other, this prayer may be vsed, and so to vse the one oneday, the other an other.



Eternall and everliting God, most mercifull Father, which of thy great long suffering and patience, hast hitherto suffered and borne with vs most miserable offenders, who haue so long strayed out of thy way, and broken all thy lawes and commandements, and haue, neither by thy manisolle benefites bestowed vpon vs unworthie and unthankefull sinners, nor by the boice of thy seruauntes and preachers, by continuall threateninges out of thy holy word, hitherto ben moued, either as thy childe, or loue to returne unto thee our most gratiouse Father, either for feare of thy iudge, meynest, as humble and lowely seruants to turne from our wickednesse. And therfore, most righ-
teous Judge; thy patience being (as it were) o-
uercome at the last, with our obstatute brenpen-
tance, thou hast most justly executed those thy ter-
rible threates agayn partly vpon vs, by plaging vs so (with most dreadfull & deadly sicknes) whereby
great multitudes of vs are dayly afflicted & con-
sumed,

sumed. We beseech thee, O merciful Father, that
in thy wrath thou wilt remember thy old great
mercies, and to correct vs in thy judgments, and
not in thy iust anger, lest we bee all consumed
and brought to nought. Looke not so much vp-
on vs and our deseruings, O most righteous
iudge, to take iust vengeance on our sinnes: but
rather remember thy infinite mercies, O most
mercifull Father, promised to vs by thy dearely
beloued Sonne our Sauour Jesus Christ, for
whose sake, and in whose name, we doe earnest-
ly and humbly cranie mercie and forgiuenesse of
our sinnes, and deliuernace from this horrible
sicknesse, being thy iust punishment and plague
for the same. And as thy holy worde doeth testifie,
that thy people of all ages, being iustly plaged for
their sinnes, and yet in their distresse unfeigned-
ly turning unto thee, and suing for thy mercie,
obtained the same: So likewise we most worthi-
ly nowe afflicted with greuous and dreadfull
plagues for our iniquites, pray thee, O mercifull
Father, to grant vs thy heauenly grace, that we
may likewise both truely and unfeignedly repent,
and obteine thy mercie, and deliuernace from the
same, which we beseech thee, O Father of al mer-
cies, and God of all consolation, to graunt
vs, for the same Jesus Christes sake,
our onely Sauour, Media.
tour and aduocate.

Amen.

This

This prayer may be said euery third day.

God had bene the best for vs, O most righteous Judge, & our most mercifull Father, that in our wealthes and quietnes, and in the middest of thy manisfold benefites continually bestowed vpon vs most unworthy sinners, wee had of loue hearkened to thy boylce, & turned vnto thee our most loving and gracious father: for in so doing, we had done the parts of good and obedient loving children. It had also bene well, if at thy dreadfull threats out of thy holy word continually pronounced vnto vs by thy seruauntes our preachers, we had of feare, as corrigible seruants, turned fro our wickedenes. But alas we haue shewed hitherto our selues towardes thee, neyther as loving children (O most merciful father) neyther as tolerable seruants, O Lorde most myghtie. Wherefore now we feele thy heauy wrath, O most righteous Judge, justly punitshing vs with grieuous and deadly sicknesse and plagues, we doe now confesse and acknowledge, and to our most iust punishment doe find in deede, that to bee most reue, which wee haue so often heard threatened to vs out of thy holy scriptures, the worde of thy eternall veritie: that thou art the same unchangeable God, of the same iustice that thou wilst, and of the same power that thou canst punish the like wickednesse and obstinacie of vs impenitent sinners in these dayes, as thou hast done in all ages heretofore. But the same
thy

thy holy Scriptures, the word of thy trueth doe also testifie, that thy strength is not shortened, but that thou canst, neyther thy goodnes abated, but that thou wilt, helpe those that in their distresse do flee unto thy mercies, and that thou art the same God of all, rich in mercie towardes all that call vpon thy name, and that thou doest not intend to destroy vs vitterly, but fatherly to correct vs, who hast pitie vpon vs, euuen when thou doest scourge vs, as by thy sayd holy worde, thy gracious promises, & the examples of thy saintes in thy holy Scriptures expressed for our comfort, thou hast assured vs. Graunt vs, O most mercifull father, that wee fall not into the vtermost of all mischiesse, to become worse vnder thy scourge, but that this thy rodde may by thy heauenly grace, speedily worke in vs the fruite and effect of true repentance, unsayned turning and conuerting vnto thee, and perfect amendement of our whole liues, that as we through our impenitencie, doe nowe most worthily seele thy justice punishing vs: so by this thy correction, wee may also seele the sweete comfort of thy mercies, graciously pardoning our sinnes, and pitifully releasing these grieuous punishmentes, and dreadfull plagues. This we craue at thy hands (O most merciful father) for thy deare

Sonne our Sauour Jesuſ

Christis sake. Amen.

Order for the Falt.

A highly decorative initial letter 'B' from a medieval manuscript. The letter is intricately decorated with dark ink outlines and filled with fine, repetitive patterns. It features large, stylized leaves and acanthus-like flourishes extending from the main body of the letter. The overall effect is one of rich, traditional craftsmanship.

De godly vse of Fasting, in tyme of common calamite, as
warre, famine, pestilence, and also whiche any weighty mat-
ter was in hand, for the Church and common wealth, is ev-
ident in holy Scriptures. Wherefore it is necessarie in
so contagious time of lekenesse, and troublous state of the
Realme, (our shunes procuring nelly the wrath of God)
that following the godly examples of king Iosaphat, and the
King of Nineve, with others, fasting with prayer be com-
mended to the people by their preachers, exhorting their
thele points.

I That this fasting be every weeke vpon the Wednesday.

2 All persons between the age of 16, and 60, years, (sick folkes, and
haruest labourers, or the like excepted) shall on that day eat but one compe-
tent and moderate meale: abstaining soberly of meat, without superfluite of ri-
otous fare, respecting necessarie, and not vnlawfullnesse.

3 The quantite being but sufficient, and without delicate, it is indifferent to eate flesh or ffe. Let no publike order be concerned herein, nor dissimulation with God committed, pretending like hypocrites godlie abstinence, but doing nothing lesse.

4 The wealthier sort, are to be mooued to give of that they spare, and are
besides able enough to giue, to relieve the poore. Considering the misery and di-
ffresse, of a number of poore miserable soules, either starving for lacke of food,
or being sicke with eating unseasonable meats.

5 This day the people are to be warned, to forbear hasty working, and common buying, and selling, and to be exercised in holy prayer, devout study, reading the Scriptures, instructing their children, rearing up all their families; especially to take heed they spend it not in plays, pastimes, idleness, hunting, taverns, lascivious wantonness, swearing, and drunkenness, for which times (the proper times of this nation) the deadly judgment, and wrath of God is come upon us.

6. Amonition is here lally to be given, that on the fasting day they have
but one Sermon at Boynng Prayer, and the same not about an houre long, to
avoyde the inconuenience that may growe by abuse of fasting: as some make it
a faction more then religion, and other with overmuch wearines and tedious-
ness, keepe the people a whole day together, which in this time of contagion, is
more dangerous in thickke and close assemblies of the multitudes. God give us
grace to repente, and in his mercy turne away his punishment from vs. Amen.

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